

Message Text

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PAGE 01 PANAMA 03268 192235 Z

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ACTION ARA-17

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 AGR-20 EB-11 AID-20 CIAE-00 INR-10

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FM AMEMBASSY PANAMA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7766

INFO AMEMBASSY BOGOTA

C O N F I D E N T I A L PANAMA 3268

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PAN, CO, EAGR, ETRN

SUBJECT: HOOF AND MOUTH DISEASE CONTROL.

REF: (A) BOGOTA 5055; (B) PANAMA 2839

1) I UNDERSTAND THAT RECOMMENDATION IN FIRST SENTENCE
PARAGRAPH 5 REFTTEL (A) IS INTENDED TO INCLUDE CONSTRUCTION
OF SECTION OF DARIEN HIGHWAY CANGLON- YAPE. I ALSO
UNDERSTAND THAT THE RECOMMENDATION IS NOT RELATED TO
TECHNICAL ASPECTS OF AFTOSA CONTROL PLAN BUT IS BASED ON
POLITICAL ASSUMPTION HALTING CONSTRUCTION IN PANAMA
WILL LEAD TO POLITICAL PRESSURE ON COLOMBIA TO AGREE TO
AFTOSA CONTROL PLAN.

2) HALTING CONSTRUCTION IN PANAMA WILL CAUSE SERIOUS
STRAINS IN RELATIONS WITH PANAMA AND IS UNLIKELY TO HAVE
ANY EFFECT WHATEVER ON COLOMBIA. QUITE THE CONTRARY,
THE COLOMBIANS ARE AWARE THAT WE WILL NOT WANT FURTHER
STRAINS IN OUR RELATIONS WITH PANAMA AND WILL ENCOURAGE
THE PANAMANIAN TO PUT PRESSURE ON US. WE WILL PUT FAR
MORE PRESSURE ON COLOMBIA TO AGREE TO ACCEPTABLE CONTROL
PROGRAM BY PROCEEDING WITH HIGHWAY PROGRAM IN PANAMA
UNTIL WE COME TO ZONE CRITICAL FOR AFTOSA CONTROL. WE
CAN THEN ENLIST HEMISPHERIC SUPPORT TO ENCOURAGE
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PAGE 02 PANAMA 03268 192235 Z

COLOMBIAN COOPERATION. BUT I SEE NO POINT IN CREATING
POLITICAL PROBLEM IN PANAMA WITHOUT COMMENSURATE ADVANTAGE
ELSEWHERE AND NONE IS APPARENT TO ME ON THE BASIS OF
INFORMATION AVAILABLE HERE.

3) ON OTHER HAND, I AGREE WITH SECOND SENTENCE PARA 5
REFTEL (A) THAT U. S. G. SHOULD NOT PROCEED WITH CONSTRUCTION
IN BUFFER ZONE ON EITHER SIDE OF BORDER UNTIL WE HAVE CONTROL
PROGRAM WHICH ALL PARTIES CONCERNED AGREE IN EFFECTIVE.
PER RECOMMENDATION CONTAINED REFTEL (B), YAPE, WHICH IS
APPROXIMATELY 25 MILES FROM BORDER, WOULD BE APPROPRIATE
POINT TO CEASE CONSTRUCTION IN PANAMA.

4) I CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT COLOMBIANS WILL COOPERATE
IF THEY SEE ECONOMIC ADVANTAGE OF HIGHWAY. THAT IS WHY
I URGED OVER THREE YEARS AGO U. S. G. TAKE INITIATIVE TO
ENCOURAGE AGREEMENT AMONG SEVEN COUNTRIES CONCERNED ON
USE OF HIGHWAY FOR TOURISM AND COMMERCE. RIGHT NOW WE
ARE PROPOSING TO TRADE U. S. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE FOR
COLOMBIAN COOPERATION ON AFTOSA CONTROL. COLOMBIA MIGHT
CONSIDER BETTER TRADE WOULD BE ACCESS TO CENTRAL AMERICA
MARKET IN RETURN FOR MEASURES ON ITS PART TO PROTECT
CENTRAL AMERICAN CATTLE INDUSTRY.
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